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## Statistics and Its Methods

*Graphic Methods for Presenting Facts.* By WILLARD C. BRINTON. (New York: The Engineering Magazine Company. 1914. Pp. xii, 371. \$4.00.)

As used in statistics the "graphic method" may mean either a method of analysis or an expository device. Mr. Brinton's book is more largely concerned with the second aspect of the method. It is a fresh and elaborate treatment of matters regarding which most teachers of statistics have had to be content to refer their students to Levasseur's paper of 1885 and to Gabaglio's *Teoria Generale*. Painstakingly done, and illustrated with over 250 well-chosen figures, the book will probably be of much service to the persons for whom it is primarily intended, namely, those who have to prepare graphic exhibits of facts bearing upon the problems of particular business undertakings. The student of economic or social statistics will get some help from it, but largely upon such purely technical matters as the proper preparation of charts and maps for the photo-engraver. Mr. Brinton's fundamental criterion of good graphic work is, properly enough, that it should convey its meaning to an uninstructed or even (it would seem) unintelligent observer, with the maximum accuracy possible under the conditions and with the minimum demand upon the attention of the observer. This is undoubtedly a good first principle of procedure, even for work addressed to an audience of practiced statisticians, so that here also the student will find that Mr. Brinton has many useful hints. But the book is altogether too large. The text is prolix, full of repetitions, and contains little of value that is not also given in the form of explanatory notes attached to the various charts. Most users of the book will find reference to these charts and explanatory notes ample for their purposes. The book would have been better if it had appeared in the form of a thin album of graphic statistics, with the text omitted.

Despite the care and general good sense shown in Mr. Brinton's work there are not a few points at which he slips. His criticism of certain charts (Figs. 114, 117, 118) intended to show the correlation of such things as rainfall and corn yield is unsound. There is no particular virtue in the use of a common zero line (for arithmetic scales) when units so dissimilar are being measured. He claims too much for the logarithmic vertical scale (pp. 132-137). The logarithmic scale is just as ill-adapted to showing absolute change as the arithmetic scale is to showing relative change. He

argues (pp. 254-256) for the superiority of connected points ("peak-top curves") over successive rectangles ("flat-top curves"). But the use of successive rectangles is the only really accurate method. It indicates the limitations of the statistics and avoids arbitrary interpolation. Mr. Brinton gives an interesting account of the construction of pin maps, but his general discussion of map making would have been improved if he had taken account of Professor Ripley's instructive paper on that subject. He departs from his theme to discuss "methods of collecting and tabulating data," but merely gives an account of the Hollerith machines. A description of simple time-saving methods in the use of cards and tally-sheets, together with some consideration of the proper planning of tables would have been more useful to the majority of his readers.

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*Income. An Examination of the Returns for Services Rendered and from Property Owned in the United States.* By SCOTT NEARING. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1915. Pp. xxvii, 238. \$1.25.)

The scope of Professor Nearing's book is accurately described in the subtitle. It is an attempt to substitute for the old categories of rent, wages, interest, and profits a new distinction between income from service and income to property; to measure for the United States, so far as the statistical data permit, the return to effort as contrasted with the return to property; to prove that service is underpaid and property ownership disproportionately rewarded; and to sound a warning that present methods of distribution must be changed, or!

The book is about evenly divided between the presentation of statistical data and an analysis of their significance. The wages data, taken largely from Professor Nearing's earlier work, *Wages in the United States*, are supplemented by census and other statistics showing the relative importance or unimportance of salaries as contrasted with wages. The wages data are comprehensive and sufficiently accurate for the purpose in hand. The measurements of the amount of property and the return thereto are, of necessity, rather loose estimates based upon census statistics of wealth and the corporation aggregates derived from income tax returns. Mr. Nearing finally decides that the total property in-